

**Browne 1887, not Douglas 1888, the Author of *Orthezia insignis*
(Homoptera: Coccoidea)**

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During a research trip to the mainland in 1940 while preparing manuscript for the forthcoming manual "Insects of Hawaii," I had an opportunity to check the original descriptions of various insects in journals not available at many institutions. This work in the nation's finest entomological libraries resulted in some rather unexpected results which will be published later, but it has been suggested that the case involving the common pest species, the greenhouse *Orthezia*, should be brought to light now. Hence, this note is presented here.

In August 1887, E. T. Browne read a paper to the Quekett Microscopical Club, and in series 2, vol. 3, pp. 169-172, plates 16-17, December, 1887 his paper was published in the society's "Journal" under the title "Notes on a Species of *Orthezia* found in Kew Gardens." In this paper he described and figured *Orthezia insignis*. This is the original description of the species, although I have never seen it credited to any author other than Douglas. The paper prepared by J. W. Douglas, however, "Note on Some British Coccidae," The Entomologist's Monthly Magazine, 24: 165-171 (the number for December, 1887) was not published until January 1888. Some authors have credited the species to Douglas and have cited the Journal of the Quekett Microscopical Society, 1887, as the reference, although that paper was written by Browne.

I have called this problem to the attention of Dr. Harold Morrison, who has also checked the matter carefully and has discussed it with Mr. C. F. W. Muesebeck. These workers agree with the conclusion that Browne is the author of the species. Dr. Morrison has kindly forwarded the following pertinent data:

Browne evidently studied his Kew Gardens discovery, going to the extent of looking up pertinent literature and comparing the insects with specimens in the British Museum. His paper contains a number of descriptive items, noted as characteristic of the genus *Orthezia*, but plainly based on his observation of this particular species. His comments on and figures of the adult male obviously are in error, almost certainly based on a *Pseudococcine* male. Browne quotes a communication from J. W. Douglas expressing his (Douglas') opinion that the insect is new. At no point in the text is the name *insignis* mentioned, nor are any claims made that the author (Browne) is attempting to describe a new species. However, in explanation for Plate XVI the following notation is made: "Fig 1. *Orthezia insignis*, male, x 30 diam." and this is followed immediately by "Fig. 2, *Orthezia insignis*, female, x 30

diam." . . . The error in attributing to *Orthesia* the male characterized by both Douglas and Browne was soon discovered and corrected in print by Mr. E. E. Green.

What has happened, it appears, is that Browne "scooped" Douglas in describing the species, although he did not do so intentionally. Browne was apparently more intent upon describing the habits of the species than naming it as a new insect, as indicated in the following statement by Douglas (1888, p. 171): "In August Mr. Edward T. Browne, Unbridge Lodge, Shepherd's Bush, sent me several examples of this species, which he had obtained in the Royal Gardens at Kew, requesting that I would describe it if new, . . ." However, it is essential to have certain basic technicalities to make for stability in nomenclature, and according to the rules of zoological nomenclature Browne first described, figured and gave a name to the species. The credit belongs to him, and the species should be known as *Orthesia insignis* Browne.